

Memorandum

DATE: **December 15, 2021**

WAP Memorandum 085

REPLY TO

ATTN OF:  **Erica Burrin, Weatherization Assistance Program, Program Manager
Weatherization and Intergovernmental Program Office**

SUBJECT: **WAP Community Scale Pilot Project (CSPP) Grant Application**

TO: **Weatherization Assistance Program Grantees**

INTENDED

AUDIENCE: **Grantee Program Managers, Grantee Technical Managers, Subgrantee Program Directors,
Subgrantee Technical Managers, Weatherization Training Centers**

The Department of Energy's (DOE) Weatherization Assistance Program ("Program" or "WAP") is pleased to invite your participation in the Community Scale Pilot Project (CSPP) Grants, authorized through P.L. 116-260, which was enacted on December 27, 2020, and included a set-aside of \$1.5 million to conduct a pilot on community scale projects within the Program.

The goal of the CSPP is to provide funding to Grantees in collaboration with local weatherization providers (Subgrantees) who demonstrate the ability to pilot complex programs, combining multiple funding sources for a holistic approach, dealing with multiple tenants and/or building owners within a specific geographic area, housing type(s), and/or specific demographics. Community Scale projects can range from:

- A cluster of single-family houses in a neighborhood or community;
- 2 (or more) small multifamily buildings;
- Large multifamily building.

To be a recipient, the state weatherization agency (Grantee) must certify that the Subgrantee has the capacity to carry out the proposed activities, and that the Grantee will include this project in addition to the oversight of their traditional WAP.

Further, to align with Executive Order 14008, which establishes the Justice40 Initiative with the goal of delivering 40% of the overall benefits of climate investments to disadvantaged communities, project plans must include an explanation on:

- The quality and manner in which the measures incorporate diversity, equity and inclusion goals in the project; and,
- The extent to which the project benefits underserved communities.

DOE defines "underserved communities" as populations sharing a particular characteristic, as well as geographic communities, that have been systematically denied a full opportunity to participate in aspects of economic, social, and civic life, as exemplified by the list in the definition of "equity" (E.O. 13985).

As applicable to geographic communities, applicants can refer to economically distressed communities identified by the Internal Revenue Service as Qualified Opportunity Zones; communities identified as disadvantaged or underserved communities by their respective States; communities identified on the Index of Deep Disadvantage referenced at <https://news.umich.edu/new-index-ranks-americas-100-most-disadvantaged-communities/>; and communities that otherwise meet the definition of “underserved communities” stated above.

DOE must comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) prior to authorizing the use of Federal funds. DOE must also consider the effects on historic properties, pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), as well as other regulations. To streamline these required reviews, DOE carries out each of these reviews under the umbrella of its NEPA review. Grantees may be required to submit additional information for a NEPA review. A NEPA determination will be included in the award documents and list allowable activities with restrictions that have been categorically excluded from further NEPA review. The NEPA determination is the DOE record that documents the NEPA review.

Grantees are required to attend a DOE led online training covering NEPA and Historic Preservation. The training will be available in early 2022 to entities involved with WAP projects including Grantees, Subgrantees and local weatherization providers to better understand NEPA, Historic Preservation, and how to complete reporting requirements for each. DOE Project Officers will notify Grantees when the training is available.

We hope that you, as a Grantee in the Program, will work with your local weatherization providers to submit your interest in a CSPP Grant to DOE. This memorandum is your invitation to participate. **Responses to this letter are due to the Department on March 1, 2022, at 11:59 PM Eastern Time.** Please note that you are not required to participate in this grant - this is a voluntary activity.

Additional information is included on the following pages, as well as the format, timeframe and instructions for your response.

DOE will review the responses received and determine how funding will be allocated among the qualifying Grantees who submitted projects on behalf of their Subgrantees. The funding will be distributed to Grantees through Program Year 2022 grants. The Grantees will then distribute the funds to the qualifying Subgrantees.

DOE’s WAP looks forward to working with you to implement these CSPP. If you have questions regarding the information in this Memorandum, please contact your DOE Project Officer.

A. Overall Submission Requirements

All responses must be provided as a Microsoft Word (.doc), 12-point font, 1-inch margins and single-spaced and attachment to an email. Only electronic responses will be accepted.

Each application **must include**:

- **Preliminary review responses.** The preliminary review responses must be in no more than **2 pages per question**.
- **Project Plan for the Secondary Review**
- **Letters of Commitment and/or Collaboration**

B. Preliminary Review

Each application **must include** responses to the following **FIVE** criteria statements to proceed to the Secondary Level of Review. Applications that do not meet the minimum criteria outlined in the first level of review above will not be evaluated further.

Note: Any questions that you have should also be emailed to WAPTA@doe.gov.

Initial Criteria Statements

- 1) Please describe your previous program/project experience and ability to pilot complex programs (e.g., dealing with multiple tenants and/or building owners within a specific geographic area, funding sources, housing type(s), and/or specific demographics).
- 2) Please detail your previous experience and capacity to expand Weatherization integration partnerships with the state/local counterparts administering one or more other federal programs, including low-income focused utility energy efficiency programs, Health and Human Services (HHS), Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and Department of Agriculture (USDA), as appropriate to service the needs of the community comprehensively.
- 3) Please describe how you will integrate diversity, equity and inclusion in the project (e.g., carried out in Empowerment or Opportunity Zones, targets diversifying workforce demographics, targets underserved markets, etc.).
- 4) Please describe your experience in delivering services through tested mechanisms to develop, implement, and coordinate a community scale project in a timely manner.
- 5) Please provide the following information to verify the entities for the project have the capacity and resources to complete a CSPP.
 - a. Name of Grantee, Address of Grantee, and Name of Grantee's Weatherization Director
 - b. Certification that you, as a Grantee, can provide necessary oversight to have the ability to make decisions about local providers that are performing well. This certification is assured by the Grantee including the following text in their response:

(Insert Grantee Name)_____certifies that:

- [Grantee] is fulfilling the monitoring and inspection protocol as part of our approved annual state plan.
 - Local quality control efforts are in place.
 - At least 5% of the completed units in state or territory are inspected by Grantee staff during the course of the program year.
 - Grantee’s quarterly progress reports are acceptable and submitted in accordance with grant requirements.
- c. The list of Subgrantee(s) that the Grantee has certified are interested and capable of undertaking the CSPP and have historically met performance goals and resumed WAP operations safely since the onset of the pandemic.

Specifically, the Subgrantee’s production and expenditures are equal to or in excess of established goals in Grantee’s production plans, and **goals will continue to be met and exceeded if the pilot project is awarded.**

For each Subgrantee/local provider that the Grantee has certified, please include the following:

- Name of Subgrantee/local provider
 - Brief description of the Community Scale pilot project to be undertaken
 - Requested funding levels for the described pilot project
- d. The Grantee shall provide certification that it will include the local provider’s project(s) in the financial oversight of the Grantee’s Weatherization program. Please include the following language in your Response:

(Insert Grantee Name)_____certifies that, if funded by DOE, it will include the local providers’ project(s) in the financial oversight of our Weatherization program.

C. Secondary Review – Project Plan

Applications that meet the minimum criteria above will have their project plan reviewed and evaluated based on how the overall plan and scope incorporate the following required elements:

- Demonstrates a focus on equitable accessibility and/or distribution of program allocations to disadvantaged communities;
- Demonstrates resources to provide the required expertise for the combination of multiple funding sources, Training & Technical Assistance to pilot project partners, if applicable (e.g., braiding funds, eligibility criteria);
- Demonstrates replicable project design that can be used by the larger Weatherization Assistance Program
- Includes clarity and specifics on how the project outcomes and metrics will be collected and measured;
- Identifies the potential positive impacts for the community to be served (e.g. energy savings, lower energy burden, healthier housing environment, create local job opportunities, etc.)
- Includes letters of commitment from partners (formed/accessed) in furthering this effort.

Please review the project plan structure and required elements and ensure your responses adequately address the criteria identified above. Plans will be reviewed and scored based on the following mechanism:

- 1 – Category is not satisfactorily addressed.
- 2 – Category is addressed but lacks sufficient detail.
- 3 – Category is well described and provides sufficient detail.

COMMUNITY SCALE PILOT PROJECT PLAN & SECTIONS

SECTION (PAGE LIMIT)	DESCRIPTION OF REQUIRED ELEMENTS
Cover Page (page limit 1)	<p>The cover page must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project title, • Specific community being addressed, • WAP Grantee and/or Subgrantee points of contact, • Names of all pilot project team member organizations, • Any statements regarding confidentiality.
Project Overview (page limit 4)	<p>The Project Overview must contain the following information:</p> <p>Project Team: Include a list of project members and provide evidence that the prime applicant is an existing WAP Grantee or Subgrantee.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background: Discuss the background of your organization, including the history, successes, and any past or current weatherization projects underway which are relevant to community scale projects. • Project Overview and Goals: Provide a briefing overview of your community scale pilot project, including specifics on why this community is a good candidate. Please include details such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Location (urban, suburban or rural) ○ Targeted buildings (single family, multifamily or manufactured housing) ○ Demographics/population ○ Geographic or environmental factors (e.g., isolated community, etc.) ○ Goals (e.g., improve buildings, reduce energy costs, etc.) • DOE Impact: Discuss the impact DOE funding would have on the proposed project. Applicants should specifically explain how DOE funding, relative to prior, current, or anticipated funding from other public and private sources, is necessary to achieve the project objectives.
Technical Description and Impact (page limit 6)	<p>The Technical Description and Impact section must contain the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feasibility: Describe the technical feasibility of the proposed pilot project and capability of achieving the anticipated outcomes, including a description of previous work done and prior results. • Equity Impacts and Benefits: Identify the projected impacts and benefits on the disadvantaged communities, including social and environmental impacts and how diversity, equity, and inclusion objectives will be incorporated in the project. • Cost Savings: Identify what processes/calculations will be used to determine the projected return on investment or payback, and any non-energy benefits included in the calculation.

<p>Project Management Workplan (page limit 8)</p>	<p>Provide a workplan with the following elements: Project Objectives, Tasks, Milestones, and Project Schedule and Project Management plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Objectives: Provide a clear and concise (high-level) statement of the goals and objectives of the project as well as the expected outcomes. • Tasks and Milestones: For each project goal/objective, identify the specific tasks that need to be accomplished to achieve the objective as well as milestones. Recommend organizing goals/objectives by quarterly performance periods that are separated by discrete, approximately annual milestones. The applicant should describe the specific expected tasks and milestones of each performance period. • Project Management: Provide the project’s proposed management plan, including the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The overall approach to and organization for managing the work. ○ The roles of each project team and members. ○ Any critical handoffs/interdependencies among project team members. ○ A description of how project changes will be handled. ○ Quality Assurance/Control. ○ Communications strategy among the project team members.
<p>Technical Qualifications and Resources (page limit 6)</p>	<p>The Technical Qualifications and Resources section should contain the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe the project team’s unique qualifications and expertise, including those of key team members. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The roles and the work to be performed by each organization. ○ Provide copies of letters of commitment or collaboration or any agreements or contracts in place between organizations. • Describe the time commitment of the key team members to support the project. • Describe the project team’s existing and leveraged resources that will facilitate the successful completion of the proposed pilot project; include a justification of any new equipment requested as part of the project. • This section should also include relevant, previous work efforts, demonstrated innovations, and how these enable the applicant to achieve the project objectives.

D. Process

The process for awarding funding for these projects will be as follows:

- 1) Interested Grantees must complete their “Community Scale Pilot Project” on behalf of interested and capable Subgrantee(s)/local weatherization provider(s) in their State or Territory. Responses are due by March 1, 2022 11:59 PM ET, and should be sent to DOE by emailing to WAPTA@doe.gov.
- 2) The Department will review and score each project plan. Once all submitted projects are reviewed, the Department will make their selections based on the highest total score.
- 3) Once the pilot projects have been selected, the Department will determine allocations based on the total number of selected pilots and each project’s requested funding level and scope.
- 4) Upon approval of a response, the Department will amend the Grantee’s Program Year 2022 grant to reflect the additional allocations. The Grantee will need to provide additional information, including revised budgets, at this time.
- 5) The Grantee is responsible for distribution and oversight of the Community Scale pilot project grant funds to the selected Subgrantee(s).